

## Shellfish Challenge Plan, Part I - Results of Strategic Assessment

### Restoration Plan Database: Crystal Reports of Individual Plan Summaries

#### I. BASIC PLAN DATA

**Plan name:**

Shellfish Challenge Plan, Part I - Results of Strategic Assessment

**Brief description of plan:**

This plan presents the results of a strategic assessment conducted for the Gulf of Mexico Program. The purpose of the Shellfish Challenge is to increase the molluscan shellfish areas available for safe harvest in the Gulf of Mexico by 10%. This planning and analysis will help identify and target solutions to environmental problems. The size of the region, complexity of shellfish-related problems, and mix of jurisdictions and interests in the region made the assessment an ideal tool for addressing the Program's Shellfish Challenge. It contains strategies agreed to by regional specialists, identifies where those strategies should be applied, and prioritizes additional information and assessment needs. Part II will contain the results of more shellfish strategy implementation assessments that focus on the feasibility of shellfish restoration activities in specific estuaries in the region. 32 shellfish strategies were developed as a result of workshops that represent the collective recommendations of the assembled specialists concerning how to achieve the Shellfish Challenge. The individual strategies, criteria used to rank the strategies, targeted watersheds, and information and assessment needs are discussed in three sections: (1) Pollution Sources, (2) Habitat Enhancement, and (3) Management. All 88 gulf watersheds from Florida Bay EDA to Rio Grande EDA are involved.

**Region the plan is located within:**

Gulf of Mexico Region

**Watershed(s) included within the plan:**

G010x , G020x , G030x , G033x , G036x , G040x , G045x , G050a , G050w , G053x , G056x , G060x , G065x , G070x , G072x , G074x , G076x , G078x , G080x , G083x , G086x , G090x , G095x , G100x , G102x , G105x , G108x , G110x , G112x , G115x , G118x , G120x , G125x , G130x , G135x , G140x , G145x , G150x , G155x , G160x , G165x , G170a , G170b , G170w , G175x , G180x , G185x , G190x , G195x , G200x , G205x , G210x , G215x , G220x , G222x , G223x , G226x , G230x , G240x , G245x , G250x , G255x , G260x , G262x , G265x , G268x , G270x , G273x , G276x , G280x , G283x , G286x , G290x , G295x , G300x , G305x , G310x , G313x , G316x , G320a , G320w , G325x , G330x , G332x , G335x , G338x , G339x , G340x

**Area plan covers (in square miles):**

14,000.00          square miles

**Plan scale:**

Multi-state

**Plan's lead organization(s):**

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Food and Drug Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference

**Plan's Main Contact Information:**

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**On-line version of plan:**

**Date of original plan:**

8/1996

## **II. TECHNICAL INFORMATION**

**Plan includes restoration goals:** Y

**Level of detail of the goals:**

MS

**Summary of the goals:**

Increase Gulf shellfish beds available for safe harvest by 10%. Interpretations: ensure harvested oysters are safe for human consumption, improve water quality - reduce bacterial and other forms of contamination present in Gulf waters, increase number of shellfish areas and production of oysters, provide better habitats for aquatic organisms. Top Habitat and Freshwater Inflow strategies □ HE1, Use existing reservoirs and-or diversions to impact higher salinities (greater than 25 ppt), HE2, Enhance clutch-substrate in areas with optimal salinities (10-25 ppt).

**Plan recommends or uses criteria for selecting restoration sites (e.g. cost benefit ratio, ecological benefits):**

Y

**Summary of the criteria:**

Habitat Enhancement Strategies HE-1, HE-2. 1995 National Shellfish Register of Classified Estuarine Waters (harvest classification, relative abundance of shellfish resource, and pollution sources contributing to harvest limitations). NOAA SEA division report - Salinity Characteristics of Gulf of Mexico Estuaries (surface and bottom salinity definitions). USGS data sets adapted to SEA Division National Estuarine Inventory (average annual gaged streamflow volume, number type and capacity of storage reservoirs and impoundments, ratio of one to the other. HE-1 Layers: (1) estuarine surface area with salinity greater than 25 ppt during high salinity season (a), (2) (a) and no, or low abundance, oyster resource (b), (3) (a) and (b) and growing waters classified as approved or conditionally approved, (4) ratio of volume of freshwater required to reduce (a) to the areas it occupies during the low salinity season to areas it occupies during low-salinity season, (5) trend of long-term freshwater inflow volume to estuary during high salinity season. For highest-rated estuaries, sufficient freshwater is already impounded to reduce estuarine salinity below 25 ppt. HE-2 layers: (1) estuarine surface area with salinity between 5-20 ppt during low-salinity season (a), and salinity less than 25 ppt during high-salinity season (b), (2) (a) and (b) and oyster resource has high or medium abundance (c), (3) (a), (b) and (c) and the growing waters are classified as approved or conditionally approved, (4) historic clutch planting □ prior to 1979, between 1980 and 1995, or both periods.

**Plan recommends restoration of specific project sites:**

N

**Plan includes a discussion of funding sources:**

N

**Plan addresses long-term protection of restored sites:**

N

**Partners included in developing the plan:**

Federal  
State  
Port Authorities/Commissions  
Business/Industry  
Academia

**Type(s) of public outreach included during plan development:**

Held public workshops, meetings, open house, or scoping meetings  
Held focus groups  
Formed an advisory group(s)

**Plan includes public outreach as part of plan implementation (e.g. annual public meeting, local group participation):**

Y

**Plan discusses the application of innovative approaches to restoration:**

N

**Plan make use of GIS mapping capabilities:**

N

**Plan addresses monitoring/reference sites for ecosystem level monitoring (baseline conditions) by:**

N

**Plan addresses monitoring/reference sites for project level monitoring by:**

N

**The plan discusses or coordinates with other restoration plans covering the same geographic area:**

Y

**Other plan names:**

Gulf of Mexico Program

**Plan contains detailed information on historic and/or current habitat size, rate of loss, acres restored or protected, etc.):**

N